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FRIEDA  
HEMPERL

SOPRANO  
1885-1955



HERMANN  
JADLOWKER

TENOR  
1877-1953

## HERMANN JADLOWKER (1877-1953)

Hermann Jadlowker was born in Riga (Latvia) on July 20, 1877. His father, Moshe Baruch Jadlowker, a merchant of the middle class let him have a strictly religious education, but as the musical talent of the child was discovered early on, he also took part in a violin class at the local music school of Emil Siegert. Once, when he and other children were singing in choir, the director of the school became interested in the youngster's voice and advised the parents to let Hermann study voice development. They however, for religious reasons, were against their son taking the career of a professional singer, though they allowed him to take part in the famous "chazan" (Cantor) Baruch Leib Rosowski's choir in the Great Synagogue of Riga. Rosowski too soon recognized the vocal endowment of the boy. Even many years later Jadlowker used to speak with the highest respect of his teacher, whose place he was to take himself in 1929.

Well aware that his parents were opposed to his study of voice, the

boy of sixteen unbosomed himself to the conductor, Knoffler, of the Municipal Theater of Riga. Knoffler advised him to go to Vienna and take lessons from Professor Josef Gansbacher, one of the leading voice teachers at the Vienna Conservatory. Seeing no chance to persuade his parents, Jadlowker did the next best thing; he simply absconded and arrived one day in Vienna with nothing but a letter of recommendation from Knoffler. He was fortunate enough to pass the entrance examination and was allowed to attend Gansbacher's classes. But soon enough after six weeks only, the Vienna police found out about the youngster without passport and other identification papers; Jadlowker had not known that to go abroad he needed the so called "Governor's passport." He was duly deported by the police and returned home. Maybe his father was impressed by his son's resolution, or by the recommendations of leading musicians; anyway he relented and Jadlowker was allowed to return to Vienna,

this time with a valid passport and to continue his studies with Gansbacher.

I am indebted to Dr. Eugene Schorr, of New York, brother of the late Fredrich Schorr, for the following addition:

"I remember Jadlowker pretty well. He and Joseph Schwartz came as poor boys to Vienna and my late father, who was then the leading Oberkantor — possessor of a beautiful high baritone voice and highly respected by the greats of the Vienna Opera, including Mahler who used to come to our house — engaged both Jadlowker and Schwarz to sing in the choir at celebrations and funerals. Both never forgot the help and did show their devotion until the end of their lives."

Four years later, in 1897 at the age of twenty, Jadlowker finished the studies at the Conservatory of Vienna with high marks, he was now ready and set for his first engagement. From various offers he chose that of the Municipal Opera of Cologne and signed a contract for three years. His first appearance was as Gomez in *Nachtlager von Granada* (Kreutzer). But whether the voice of the young singer — barely

twenty years — was still too small, or for whatever other reason, Jadlowker did not please the critics and was given his notice after the first year. His next jobs took him to towns like Königsberg, Rostock and Stettin, but still with little success. It appears that the voice of the young artist was at that time too light. But in the next job, at the Municipal Theater of Riga, he managed to make his way and became at once popular with the public. A new attempt at advancement at the Breslau Opera House failed, so Jadlowker returned to Riga for five years, and only in 1906 felt himself strong enough to apply for the job of first tenor at the Royal Court Opera at Karlsruhe, even declining much higher offers to remain in Riga.

From Karlsruhe began Jadlowker's international career, he became very popular with the public and the Court. Also his repertoire enlarged and among his best parts were "Faust", "Don Jose", "Raoul", "Des Grieux" (Massenet), Rodolfo, Duke of Mantova, later on also *Il Trovatore* and even Otello. Of the Mozart operas he counted Don Otavio among his best parts.

Other roles and performances



included a Faust, George Brown (Die weisse Dame) and Raoul (Huguenots) in one week of March in 1906. In 1908 Prince Friedrich of Prussia heard him as Gerald in Lakmè. Karlsruhe remained for years the base from where he undertook his travels to Vienna and Budapest. He was fond of the public in both these cities, and in 1910 he was invited to the New York Metropolitan Opera.

His first appearance in New York was in the framework of a concert where he sang the Lensky aria (Eugen Onegin) on Jan. 30, 1910. Two weeks later his debut on the opera stage was as Lohengrin with Fremstad, Soomer, Louise Homer (Feb. 11) and the next day he sang Turiddu opposite Emmy Destinn and Dinh Gilly. In the usual opera concerts he sang Walther's "Preislied," Rodolfo's "Racconto" and the Rigoletto quartet with Alma Gluck and Forsell. On March 1, 1910, he sang with Farrar and Scotti the second Act of Tosca. While the critics did not like his Max in Freischütz, he was immediately acclaimed as Faust (March 14) with Farrar, Didur and Gilly. After one more Turiddu and two Canios — not then on the same nights, but wisely

only in one of the two veristic operas (Canio with Bella Alten. Amato and Gilly, another time with Forsell) and one appearance with the Boston Opera Company on March 12, when he sang Cavaradossi, with Dereyne as Tosca and Blanchart as Scarpia; Jadowlker sailed for home.

He returned to the U.S.A. for the 1910-11 season, singing first at Boston on Nov. 12 to the Tosca of Carmen Meltis, with Baklanoff as Scarpia and on the 14th in Faust with Nielsen as Marguerite, Sibiriakoff as Mefisto Baklanoff as Valentine. Then to New York where he faced the great Toscanini for the first time for two performances of La Boheme, Nov. 21 and Dec. 8 with Ferrar, Alten, Scotti and Pini-Corsi. On December 28, 1910 the world premiere of Humperdinck's Königskinder took place at the Met. Alfred Hertz conducted, with Jadowlker (as the Prince), Ferrar (Goosegirl), Homer and Goritz were in the cast.

It was in New York that Jadowlker was hired for the Berlin Court Opera. The Kaiser had heard him in Karlsruhe and liked him very much. The contract bound the singer to Berlin for



six years leaving him enough time for his international guest performances.

During his third and last New York season Jadlowker sang many roles, including the part of Florindo in *Donne Curiose* (Wolf-Ferrari) on Jan. 3, 1912 with a fine cast, including Ferrar, Didur, Scotti, and Pini-Corsi, the conductor being Toscanini. But the opera achieved only four more repeats. He did not return to New York, but devoted his main activities to the Berlin Opera. He continued to enjoy the favor of Emperor Wilhelm II, who made him his "Prussian Chambersinger." Once when during a visit of the Russian Tsar Nicolai a special performance of *Lohengrin* was arranged, the Emperor boasted of and introduced his *Lohengrin* — Jadlowker, to which the Tsar replied "Maybe your *Lohengrin*, but my subject." Jadlowker had remained a Russian citizen.

An important musical event in which Jadlowker participated was the world premiere of R. Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos*, first edition, in Stuttgart on October 25, 1912, Max von Schillings conducting, with Maria Jeritz and Margarete Siems. There are still in existence

letters from Richard Strauss to Jadlowker imploring him to sing Bacchus again, at Berlin, as none else were as fine as he and Strauss was afraid of "provincial tenors." This plea was unsuccessful, as two Berlin State Opera casts found show that on May 27, 1913 *Ariadne* was performed with Hafgren-Waag in the name part, Jadlowker as Bacchus and Bosetti as Zerbinetta and on Oct. 11, 1913 there was a *Don Carlos* with Knüpfer as Phillip, Jadlowker as Carlos, Bronsgeest as Posa, Hafgren-Waag as Elisabeth and Ober sang Eboli.

During June, 1914 there were six more guest appearances at Karlsruhe: Faust, Alfredo Germont, Don Jose, Eleazar in *La Juive*, Wilhelm Meister in *Mignon* and Bacchus in *Ariadne*. Among the new roles Jadlowker added to his repertoire was Parsifal; he sang his part in the Berlin Opera on May 31, 1914 with a cast including Forsell, Leffler-Burkhard, Bischoff, Habich. He continued his contractual activities at Berlin until 1919 with some engagements elsewhere (Budapest). Some time that year Jadlowker left the Berlin Opera, but stayed on in that city, singing sometimes

operetta, among his favorite parts being Zigeunerbaron and Lehar's "Frasquita." In 1921 he gave an all lieder program with works by Paissiello, Schubert, Wolf, Rachmanioff and Gretchaninoff with Seidler Winkler at the piano.

During his long residence in Berlin, Jadlowker often appeared in charity concerts, especially during the war; he also did a lot of private charitable work and the number of families supported by him was not small. He had married in 1903 Anna Hotz, the daughter of a Figa merchant, and it was a happy marriage, though not blessed with children, which lasted until Mrs. Jadlowker died in 1940.

In 1929 Jadlowker returned to Riga and became Chief chazan at the Great Synagogue, the same place where he had started his musical career almost forty years previously. He commenced to study talmud with rabbinical authorities, but became involved with a conflict with one of the rabbis because Jadlowker wanted an organ installed in the synagogue, but was unsuccessful with this request. From 1936 to 1938 Jadlowker also became Professor of singing at the Riga

Conservatory, he appeared also quite often, with his pupils as his choir, in music of Jewish sacral character.

The beginning of the Nazi regime found Jadlowker still in Riga, but more and more his long standing desire to go to Palestine, then a British mandate, and join his family there grew insistent, and in 1938 he arrived with his wife in Jerusalem. At first he joined the Jerusalem Conservatory and became Professor of singing; as a teacher he was strict, but his pupils loved him. After the death of Mrs. Jadlowker in 1940 the widower moved to Tel Aviv, opened a singing studio at a street near the seashore (he swam daily) and became involved with the founding preparations of the Palestine Opera, together with the conductor Golinkin. These plans came to nothing due to lack of assistance on the part of the municipal authorities and also Jadlowker had to admit that the young singers in the country were an unsatisfactory basis for a new opera house at that time. From time to time he appeared still in charity concerts. Up to the very last day of his life, May 13, 1953, Jadlowker continued to teach; music had been is

whole life.

(Excerpts from an article by Dr. Alfred Frankenstein, published in *The Record Collector*, March, 1970.)

A discography of Jadlowker reveals that this artist left 235 sides. He first began recording for Odeon in Germany between 1907 and 1910, in which span Jadlowker produced 109 sides, of opera arias. The repertoire is primarily German (Lohengrin, Freischutz, Meistersinger Tannhauser) and Italian ("Pagliacci, Trovatore, Boheme, Tosca, Traviata) with duets featuring Modlinger, Hempel, Denner, Westoven and Robinson. In the United States,

Jadlowker was signed by Victor in 1912, recording seven sides, notably one with Farrar. For the Gramophone Company and Polydor, Jadlowker continued his busy and exhaustive sessions, producing more than 80 titles in a two year span. In 1924, his late acoustic records were published by Polydor, featuring some lieder. His final appearance took place in 1927 before the new electric process microphone, presented on this disc along with two earlier titles. A most rewarding artist, Jadlowker's discs amply document his career and repertoire, often displaying his famous trill.

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## FRIEDA HEMPEL (1885-1955)

Frieda Hempel was a rare singer, gifted with a great range, evenness, beauty of tone and an artist who brought intelligence and taste to her interpretations. An absolute polish endowed her coloratura singing with a facility that masked her virtuosity and imbued excitement to roles ranging from the *Queen of the Night* to *Rosina*, *Mimi* and *Eva*.

Hempel was a native of Leipzig and first studied at their Conservatory as a pianist. With the development of her voice, she transferred to the Stern Conservatory in Berlin to be trained under Madame Nicklass-Kempner in 1902. After three years, Hempel made her debut in August 1905 in *Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Royal Opera. The following two



years were busy ones for Hempel, then engaged at the Royal Opera in Schwerin. She returned to Berlin, until 1912.

Hempel was first heard in the United States in 1912 when she made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera as *Marguerite in Les Huguenots*. In that cast were Emmy Destinn, Caruso, Scotti, Rothier and Didur. In her season at the Met. Hempel had the principal roles in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Euryanthe*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Traviata*, *Martha*, *The Magic Flute*, *Barber of Seville*, *Nozze di Figaro*, *Rigoletto*, and *Meistersinger*. A year before her departure for America, Hempel had been asked by Richard Strauss to introduce his Marschalin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, which had its American debut with Hempel in the role in 1913.

Hempel contributed her account of collaborating with Strauss to a music journal in the 20's:

"I was fortunate — when I first appeared in opera — to be surrounded by many of the great men in music of the period. There were Karl Muck, Nikisch, Furtwängler, Leo Blech and Richard Strauss —



all of whom aided me, as a young singer, to gain solid training and musical ideals. Especially was this true of Richard Strauss."

"At that time, Strauss at the Berlin Opera also directed some Italian works. It often happened that I was assigned the coloratura roles in such operas. I recall that once, when we were rehearsing *The Barber of Seville*, he came backstage and said to me quite candidly, 'Please go ahead and sing the role according to your instincts. I don't know much about coloratura — where you make your trills, how long they are and where

the cadenzas come in.' He knew, however, that I was dependable as a musician, and even allowed me to compose my own cadenza including a high F sharp — for the third act bravura aria."

"After the performance, Strauss said to me in great amazement: 'You sang a high F sharp! I never head the like!' This is said to have given him the idea for *Zerbinetta's* very taxing aria in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, which he originally composed for me. I never sang the role. (Incidentally, no one has ever sung the air in this version.)"

"Strauss urged me to rehearse it with him. I was very busy with artistic engagements at the time and it was difficult to arrange, but I went to his home in Garmisch and there we rehearsed the role together. However, fate stepped in to prevent my appearance. While I was in this Bavarian town, I climbed mountains almost daily with Strauss' wife, who was also quite fond at the time of such exercise. I must have caught a cold while engaged in it, and though I continued to rehearse, this became worse. In the end, I had to give up the role. Someone else created it, and as it was already time for my return to Amer-

ica to sing at the Metropolitan, I never did this most taxing of all coloratura parts."

"Whenever we met, Strauss tried to persuade me to sing *Salome*. He said he thought it would be ideal for me, but I knew it would not be so for my voice. Strauss' operas are almost all somewhat taxing to sing ... but there is a certain intensity in everything he writes, contrasts of the sweet and tender with the perverse. Of all his operas, I like *Rosenkavalier* best. As compared with *Salome* and *Elektra*, some of the duets in *Rosenkavalier* sound almost like simple folksongs. I was particularly busy just before the world premiere of this latter work, for I had to learn all three of the feminine roles!"

"Strauss always had a keen sense of what the public would like in the way of interpretations. However, when it came to casting *Rosenkavalier* for its first performance, he showed a curious hesitancy. Perhaps he knew that a great deal of the work depended on finding the right singers for these exacting but subtly contrasted women's parts."

"First, he gave me the role of *Oktavian*. After I had finished

studying it, he told me I should have to sing Sophie instead, because he couldn't find any artist who could fill it so well. After that was ready, he apologized and almost begged me on his knees to prepare the *Marschalin*, as he couldn't find one! In the end, I knew all three parts, but it was as the latter that I sang in the Berlin premiere. According to critics and public, it is my best role."

"Incidentally, Strauss did not conduct Rosenkavalier at its premiere, which was led by Dr. Karl Muck. The composer, however, worked with us on every detail at all rehearsals, which were long and difficult. We did not leave the Opera House each night until all was set as he wished, and these sessions usually lasted until after midnight. The entire opera staff and all the conductors kept us company and sat through the rehearsals. Costumes, sets — every detail was carefully scrutinized."

In 1913, Hempel appeared as the *Marschalin* at Drury Lane with Beecham and his opera company. Ten years later, the soprano began reviving Jenny Lind's repertoire, dressing in a crinoline costume with rosebud trimmings to sing arias from forgotten works such as

Meyerbeer's *L'Etoile du Nord*. A critic from the Daily Telegraph quipped:

"One could hardly repress a feeling of regret that a voice so lovely should be wasted on anything so feeble and futile — even in its sadly faded kind — as the once famous aria 'with two flutes' from *L'Etoile du Nord*, which as Jenny Lind sang it used to be spoken of as an aria for three flutes so marvelously did her voice blend with the obbligati instruments. One of the most enchanting of Mme. Hempel's efforts was the *Echo Song*. The echo effects were accomplished with perfect art and delicately graded tones of liquid beauty that completely captivated the audience ... Her Schumann was a pure delight, as also was Mozart's *Wienelied*, given as an encore with a delicacy of style and phrasing that could not have been bettered."

In 1919, Hempel gave up the opera stage for lieder. She sang every season in New York until her final recital on December 4, 1949. In 1955, she returned to Germany, already ill with cancer, and passed away in Berlin, shortly after having completed her autobiography "*Mein Leben dem Gesang*."

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